



Caring Families Coalition

713 Main St. Rear Bldg.
Willimantic CT 06226

Phone: 860-539-6151
Fax: 860-524-0738

CONNECTICUT LEGISLATURE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Hearing on Access to Affordable Quality Healthcare
January 31, 2007

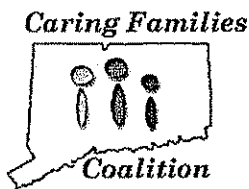
Name: Carol Silva

Address: 150 South St. Willimantic, CT 06226

Everyone should have access to affordable, quality health care. For this reason, I support Senate Bill 1 and hope the Public Health Committee works to expand the language of this bill so people in Connecticut have the same access to quality health care as state legislators. I applaud the Legislature for taking up this important issue, of quality healthcare for Connecticut's citizens. It is an issue that is of great concern to everyone whether one has a good insurance policy or not. I believe providing access to everyone has a direct benefit on the cost of coverage for everyone.

I believe that good healthcare begins with prevention. This should include complete physical exams, immunizations and screenings according to age, gender, and race as well as diagnosis and treatment of specific acute and chronic illnesses. This allows the individual to be as well as possible and means avoiding progression into an acute phase. It should also include personalized programs on nutrition, exercise and less traditional applications such as chiropractic, herbal and naturopathic care. These applications would be very cost effective and provide a better quality of life.

Of course, accessible primary care is essential. It needs to be available to everyone regardless of employment status on a sliding fee scale. It should include access to specialty care providers and pharmacies that would be able to buy medicines in bulk and offer discounted prescriptions.



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A big part of healthcare is also dental care, mental health care and foot care especially for diabetics. Too often these are looked at as extra or optional. Yet when someone has a tooth problem, left untreated, it often translates to serious overall health problems. Mental health, when properly monitored and cared for, could allow a person to live a happier more productive life. Comprehensive care should also include addiction recovery services and support. These services would also save costs.

This healthcare plan should also include links to other community services such as social service providers, family health agencies, and youth services.

Money could also be saved by having urgent care clinics for non-emergency situations that occur after hours. This would reduce reliance on Emergency Rooms at hospitals. Such clinics would be there for fevers, ear infections and such.

Of course, it would be of little value if transportation were not available. In my area of the state, the Northeast Corner, as well as many others, people cannot get to the providers they need. Too many providers do not accept state programs and public transportation is inadequate for getting to medical appointments. I believe resolving this issue is very doable and should be part of the healthcare bill.

I know that many of you pledged your support at regional forums held by the Caring Families Coalition to support a plan that would include these services. I urge you now to remember that pledge of eliminating the two-tiered health care system and work toward making universal health care a reality for all of Connecticut's people.

Thank you.